

Message Text

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ACTION FSI-01

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R 291215Z OCT 75
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9073

UNCLAS PRAGUE 2760

FOR FSI MR. SOLLENBERGER; EUR/EX NICK BASKEY; EUR/EE KENT
BROWN FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AFSI, AFSP, CZ
SUBJECT: POST LANGUAGE PROGRAM

1. REVIEWING EMBASSY RESOURCES IN PREPARATION FOR COMING
OF NEW AMBASSADOR, WE HAVE FOUND POST LANGUAGE PROGRAM TO
BE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE DUE TO INADEQUATE FUNDING. WHILE
FULLY AWARE THAT THE BUDGET CRUNCH IS EVEN WORSE THIS YEAR
THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS, WE WANT TO BRING TO YOUR ATTENTION
THE PROBLEM WE FACE.

2. WE HAVE ELEVEN OFFICERS IN LANGUAGE-DESIGNATED POSITIONS,
SOME BUT NOT ALL OF WHOM HAVE HAD TRAINING AT FSI AND
REACHED MINIMUM PROFICIENCY . PERHAPS IT IS AN INDICATION
BOTH OF THE DIFFICULTY OF CZECH AND OF THE DESIRE OF PERSONNEL
ASSIGNED HERE TO MASTER IT, BUT EVERY ONE OF THESE OFFICERS
HAS REQUESTED TRAINING AT POST, AS HAVE NUMEROUS STAFF
MEMBERS AND WIVES. THE EIGHT MARINES ARE UNDER
INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDY 100 HOURS OF CZECH UPON ARRIVAL.
IN ADDITION TO PRESENT DEMAND, WE FORESEE THAT THE
OFFICERS SCHEDULED TO REPLACE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL
OFFICERS FARRAND AND PURNELL WILL BE COMING TO PRAGUE
NEXT SPRING HAVING HAD ONLY A PORTION OF THE FSI COURSE.
THEY WILL NEED AS INTENSIVE TRAINING AS WE CAN PROVIDE.
IT IS LIKELY THAT NEW AMBASSADOR WILL ALSO WISH TO
BEGIN OR CONTINUE CZECH TRAINING, AS DID AMBASSADOR
SHERER.

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3. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND OF NEED, FUNDING OF LANGUAGE PROGRAM IS LAMENTABLY INADEQUATE. TOTAL ALLOTMENT FOR FY 76 WAS \$950, DOWN FROM LAST YEAR DESPITE ATTEMPTS TO SECURE AN INCREASE. AN INCREASE TO \$1200 WAS ORIGINALLY PLANNED, BUT FAILED TO MATERIALIZE. NET RESULT WAS DECREASE OF \$50. EXCLUDING \$225 SPENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER, WE ESTIMATE WE HAVE AVAILABLE AN AVERAGE OF \$22. PER WEEK FOR THE REMAINDER OF FISCAL YEAR. AT THE SET RATE OF APPROXIMATELY \$2 PER HOUR, THIS WILL PROVIDE ONLY ELEVEN CLASS HOURS PER WEEK. GIVEN RANGE OF ABILITY LEVELS, DIFFICULTY OF THE LANGUAGE, AND DIFFERING VOCABULARIES REQUIRED BY VARIOUS MEMBERS OF STAFF, WE HAVE FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO COMBINE STUDENTS INTO CLASSES OF FOUR OR MORE.

4. DESPITE THESE FUNDING DIFFICULTIES AND THE NOTORIOUS DIFFICULTY OF CZECH, THE ENTHUSIASM OF THE EMBASSY STAFF TO LEARN IT HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER. WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE THIS TREND AS THERE HAS BEEN A PROBLEM ENCOURAGING THE STUDY OF CZECH IN THE PAST. ESTIMATE WE COULD PROFITABLY USE 30 CLASS HOURS A WEEK WHICH WOULD REQUIRE \$1000 ADDITIONAL, BUT REALIZING THIS IS PROBABLY UNREALISTIC THIS YEAR GIVEN BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS, CONSIDER THAT IN ORDER TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM A MINIMUM OF \$600 IN ADDITIONAL FUNDS IS REQUIRED. LESS THAN THIS OR NO INCREASE AT ALL MAY WELL RESULT IN OUR LOSING EXCELLENT TEACHER HIRED LAST YEAR AFTER TEN CANDIDATES INTERVIEWED AND REJECTED, AS WELL AS DEMORALIZATION AND IN MANY CASES END OF STUDY FOR THOSE NOW MAKING PROGRESS IN THE LANGUAGE.

5. YOUR CONSIDERATION AND ASSISTANCE IN THIS MATTER WILL BE APPRECIATED BY ENTIRE EMBASSY STAFF.
PERRY

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